WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. A composition comprising a peptide having the formula R'-Glx-Glx-Lys-R" or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof;

wherein Glx is Glu or Gln; R' is H- or a first amino acid sequence having fewer than 7 amino acids; R'' is -H or a second amino acid sequence having fewer than 7 amino acids; and the peptide has a sequence of at least 5 and not more than 9 amino acids.

2. The composition of claim 1, wherein R' is H-, Thr-Ala-, Thr-Pro-, Ser-Ala-, Ser-Pro-, Ser-Ser-, Met-Leu-Thr-Ala-, or Leu-Thr-Ala-; and R" is -H, -Ala, -Ala-Ala or -Ala-Val.

3. A composition of claim 2, wherein the peptide is L-Thr-L-Pro-L-Glu-L-Glu-L-Lys.

4. A composition of claim 2, wherein the peptide is L-Thr-L-Ala-L-Glu-L-Glu-L-Lys.

5. A pharmaceutical preparation comprising:

a peptide having the formula R'-Glx-Lys-R" or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein Glx is Glu or Gln; R' is H- or a first amino acid sequence having fewer than 7 amino acids; R'' is -H or a second amino acid sequence having fewer than 7 amino acids; and the peptide has a sequence of at least 2 and not more than 9 amino acids; and

a physiologically acceptable carrier.

6. The pharmaceutical preparation of claim 5, wherein R' is H-, Glx-, Thr-Ala-Glx-, Thr-Pro-Glx-, Ser-Ala-Glx-, Ser-Pro-Glx-, Ser-Ser-Glx-, Met-Leu-Thr-Ala-Glx-, or Leu-Thr-Ala-Glx-; and R" is -H, -Ala, -Ala-Ala or -Ala-Val.

7. The pharmaceutical preparation of claim 6, wherein the peptide is L-Glu-L-Lys.

8. The pharmaceutical preparation of claim 6, wherein the peptide is L-Thr-L-Pro-L-Glu-L-Glu-L-Lys.

9. A composition of claim 6, wherein the peptide is L-Thr-L-Ala-L-Glu-L-Glu-L-Lys.

10. A method for modulating the activity of a host's immune system, comprising administering to the host a peptide having the formula R'-Glx-Lys-R" or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein Glx is Glu or Gln; R' is H- or a first amino acid sequence having fewer than 7 amino acids; R'' is -H or a second amino acid sequence having fewer than 7 amino acids; and the peptide has a sequence of at least 2 and not more than 9 amino acids.

11. A method as in claim 10, wherein R' is H-, Glx-, Thr-Ala-Glx-, Thr-Pro-Glx-, Ser-Ala-Glx-, Ser-Pro-Glx-, Ser-Ser-Glx-, Met-Leu-Thr-Ala-Glx-, or Leu-Thr-Ala-Glx-; and R" is -H, -Ala, -Ala-Ala or -Ala-Val.

12. A method as in claim 11, wherein the peptide is L-Thr-L-Ala-L-Glu-L-Glu-L-Lys or L-Glu-L-Lys.

13. A method as in claim 10, wherein the peptide is administered in a physiologically acceptable carrier.

14. A method for treating an infection in a host, comprising administering to the host a peptide having the formula R'-Glx-Lys-R" or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein Glx is Glu or Gln; R' is H- or a first amino acid sequence having fewer than 7 amino acids; R'' is -H or a second amino acid sequence having fewer than 7 amino acids; and the peptide has a sequence of at least 2 and not more than 9 amino acids.

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15. The method as in claim 14, wherein R' is H-, Glx-, Thr-Ala-Glx-, Thr-Pro-Glx-, Ser-Ala-Glx-, Ser-Pro-Glx-, Ser-Ser-Glx-, Met-Leu-Thr-Ala-Glx-, or Leu-Thr-Ala-Glx-; and R" is -H, -Ala, -Ala-Ala or -Ala-Val.

16. The method as in claim 14, wherein the peptide is L-Thr-L-Ala-L-Glu-L-Glu-L-Lys or L-Glu-L-Lys.

17. The method as in claim 14, wherein the infection is a bacterial infection.

18. The method as in claim 17, further comprising administering an antibiotic to the host.

19. The method as in claim 14, wherein the infection is a viral infection.

20. The method as in claim 19, further comprising administering an anti-viral agent to the host.

21. The method as in claim 14, wherein the infection is a fungal infection.

22. The method as in claim 21, further comprising administering an anti-fungal agent to the host.

23. The method as in claim 14, wherein the infection is a parasitic infection.

24. The method as in claim 23, further comprising administering an anti-parasitic agent to the host.

25. The method as in claim 14, wherein the peptide is administered intravenously, intramuscularly, intrathecally, subcutaneously, intraperitoneally, intranasally, orally, intrabronchially, rectally, or topically.

26. A method for treating atopic states in a host comprising administering to the host a peptide having the formula R'-Glx-Lys-R" or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein Glx is Glu or Gln; R' is H- or a first amino acid sequence having fewer than 7 amino acids; R'' is -H or a second amino acid sequence having fewer than 7 amino acids; and the peptide has a sequence of at least 2 and not more than 9 amino acids.

27. The method as in claim 26, wherein R' is H-, Glx-, Thr-Ala-Glx-, Thr-Pro-Glx-, Ser-Ala-Glx-, Ser-Pro-Glx-, Ser-Ser-Glx-, Met-Leu-Thr-Ala-Glx-, or Leu-Thr-Ala-Glx-; and R" is -H, -Ala, -Ala-Ala or -Ala-Val.

28. The method as in claim 27, wherein the peptide is L-Thr-L-Ala-L-Glu-L-Glu-L-Lys or L-Glu-L-Lys.

29. A method of treating leukocytic disorders in a host comprising administering to the host a peptide having the formula R'-Glx-Lys-R" or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein Glx is Glu or Gln; R' is H- or a first amino acid sequence having fewer than 7 amino acids; R'' is -H or a second amino acid sequence having fewer than 7 amino acids; and the peptide has a sequence of at least 2 and not more than 9 amino acids.

30. A method for augmenting vaccinations in a host comprising administering to the host a peptide having the formula R'-Glx-Lys-R" or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof, wherein Glx is Glu or Gln; R' is H- or a first amino acid sequence having fewer than 7 amino acids; R'' is -H or a second amino acid sequence having fewer than 7 amino acids; and the peptide has a sequence of at least 2 and not more than 9 amino acids.

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